Import of Coal

3407. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is an importer of Coal;

(b) if so, what is the total quantity of coal imported its price in U.S. dollars as well as in Rupee as per its present value;

(c) what are the names of the countries from which the coal was imported and the quantity thereof;

(d) the reasons for import of coal: and

(e) whether Government is contemplating to stop import of coal by encouraging use of Indian coal

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (d) The integrated Steel Plants, both of Public Sector and of Private Sector, import some quantity of metallurgical coking coal both on qualitative and quantitative considerations. The details of imports by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) of Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) and Tata Iron and Steel Company Limited (TISCO) for the year 1991-92 is as under:-

Organisation	Country of Import		Quantity (Million Tonnes
SAIL	Australia		4·200
	New Zealand		0·055
		TOTAL :	4·255
VSP	Australia		0·953
	New Zealand		0·036
		TOTAL: .	0·989
TISCO	Australia		0·84€

The present C&F price of the imported coal varies from US $ 64 and US $ 67 (approximately equivalent to Rs. 1900—2000) per metric tonne.

(e) The available indigenous coking coal is being used fully. Only the qualitative and quantitative gaps in the demand and supply are met through imports.

Scrap from Mini and Integrated Steel Plants

3408. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated demand for scrap from Mini and Integrated Steel Plants during the current year and projections for the next five to ten years—indigenous availability and import requirement for the same period;

(b) what steps are proposed to be taken to reduce the import of scrap and save foreign exchange—including steps proposed to increase substantially the production of sponge iron; and

(c) whether Government are planning to provide gas for production of sponge iron and the details of gas based projects with locations and capacities approved so far/proposed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) In order to reduce the dependence on imported steel melting scrap, increase of production of sponge iron which is a partial substitute of scrap is being encouraged. Taking into account the expected production of sponge iron, a recent study by Metallurgical and Engineering Consultants (India) Limited has estimated the demand of steel melting scrap of Mini Steel Plants (electric furnaces), iron foundries and integrated steel plants (excluding their own generation) at 5.25 million tonnes and 6.24 million tonnes in 1992-93 and 1996-97, respectively, against which indigenous availability is estimated 2.95 million tones and 3.79 million tonnes, respectively. Thus the import requirement is about 2.5 million tonnes.

(c) Gas allocation has been made to the following sponge iron projects for meeting the domestic demand.

(in Million Tonnes)

Sl. No.	Name of the Company	Location of Project	Capacity
1.	M/s. ESSAR Gujarat Ltd.	Hazira, Gujarat.	0.8
2.	M/s. GRASIM Industries Limited.	Raigad, Maharashtra.	0.6
3.	M/s. Nippon Denro Ispart Limited.	Raigad, Maharashtra.	1.0
4.	M/s. Usha Rectifier Corporation Ltd.	Jagdishpur (Sultanpur) U.P.	0.8
5.	M/s. Kalyani-Konkan Sponge Limited.	Rigad, Maharashtra.	0.75

Excess payment of customs duty by SAIL

3409. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in a Report in 1987 Part IX made certain observations about excess payment of Customs duty by the Transport and Shipping Department of SAIL on an imported consignment of Driving Spindle which was cleared in October, 1986 from Calcutta Port after payment of Customs duty of Rs. 63.62 lakhs on 15th October, 1986 when the customs duty leviable was only Rs. 6.362 lakhs;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Departmental Head, the then Chief (Transport and Shipping) was informed by Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) on 9th April, 1987 about abnormally high customs duty;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the refund of Rs. 57.26 lakhs was obtained in April, 1988 from the customs which resulted into loss of interest of Rs. 15.52 lakhs;

(d) whether it is a fact that the then Director (Commercial) had confirmed that he would chargesheet the Departmental Head;

(e) whether it is also a fact that the then Departmental Head was instead given out of turn promotions; and

(f) if so, what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) On 09-04-1987, Rourkela Steel Plant intimated the Finance Depart-